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Mr. *KEITH's*

Two Sermons,

Preach'd at

St. *GEORGE BOTOLPH-LANE,*

MAY the 12th. 1700.

TWO SERMONS,

PREACHED BY

GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M.A.

TWO SERMONS

Preach'd at the

Parish-Church

OF

St. *George Botolph-Lane*, LONDON,

MAY the 12th. 1700.

By *GEORGE KEITH.*

Being his first Preaching after Ordination.

The Second Edition.

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MORNING.

St. LUKE I. 6.

And they were both Righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.

WHO theſe both were, the foregoing Verſe tells us, *viz. Zacharias*, a certain Prieſt of the courſe of *Abia*, and his Wife *Elizabeth*, of the Daughters of *Aaron*.

Before I proceed to any Doctrinal Obſervations on the Text that I have read to you, I purpoſe (by God's Aſſiſtance) to ſpeak divers things by way of opening the ſeveral Words of it.

And they were both Righteous. They are ſaid to be both Righteous, not with reſpect only to that particular Vertue, commonly called commutative and diſtributive Juſtice, which is one of the four Cardinal Vertues; but all other Vertues, both Moral and Theological, as appears by the following Words;

Words, that they *walked in all the Commandments of God, &c.* which therefore conſequentially and by concomitance, includes the Righteouſneſs of Juſtification by Faith, as well as the Righteouſneſs of Sanctification.

That *they were Righteous before God*, ſignifies their inward Sincerity and Integrity. Hypocrites may ſeem righteous before Men, but none are righteous before God but ſincere Believers.

Walking in all the Commandments. The *Greek* Word tranſlated here *Walking*, ſignifies Journying, going onward by a progreſſive Motion, going from ſtrength to ſtrength, as it is *Pſal.* 84. 7. This ſhews, that true Religion is not bare Talk or Theory, and meer Speculation, but a conſtant and diligent Practice, performing a continual Obedience to God's Commands, expreſſed here by the Metaphor of Walking. This alſo imports, that the Commands of God, both reſpecting Faith and Moral Duties, are given us here in this World, to be the way that leads to the Heavenly Kingdom, as we walk in them; that is, as we obey them, and not otherwiſe. This ſerves to reprove two ſorts of Perſons; one ſort, that take ſome care to perform the Matter, or external Part of the leſſer Commands of God, but neglect the greater; as the Phariſees, who paid Tythes of Mint, and other ſmall things, but neglected Mercy and Judgment; another ſort that think, if they keep the greater, that will excuſe them from the leſſer; but ſeeing he who commands the greater, commands alſo the leſſer, as St. *James* ſaith, *He who offends in one Point, is guilty of all.*

All the Commandments. This ſignifies their great Sincerity, and ſincere Aim and Progreſs towards Perfection; but not as if they had attained a ſinleſs Perfection, as ſome by miſ-

misconstruing the Words do infer: For that *Zacharias* had not this sinless Perfection, is evident from the Words of the Angel *Gabriel*, who both did blame him for his not believing his Message, and also told him what his Punishment should be, *ver.* 20. *And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my Words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.*

Thus, oft doth God deal with his Servants, as he did here with *Zacharias*; he mixed great Mercy with his Punishment, and made the Matter of his Punishment to be a Mercy, being a Sign to him, to persuade him, and confirm his Faith, that the thing should come to pass which the Angel foretold.

Quest. But, doth not Walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God, import a sinless Perfection that they had attained?

Answ. Nay. But for the better understanding of my Answer, we are to distinguish betwixt the Matter of God's Commands, and the Manner how we, or any, perform them. We may keep the Matter of this or that Commandment, and yet fail in the Manner of Performance: For Example, When we extend our Charity for the Relief of the Poor, to our best Ability; here we perform the Matter of the Duty; but yet, if there be any thing of Vain Glory in it, so as to be seen of Men, if we do it not with a pure Intention, and with pureness of Charity and Affection, we are faulty in the Manner. Also, we may perform the Duty of the Matter of Prayer, as when we pray to the true God, and not to any Idol or false God, and that we pray in the Name of Christ Jesus, and in sound Words; here the Matter of our Prayer is right; but, if we pray not with that strength of Faith, with that life and

and fervour of Love, and true Devotion unto God, that we ought to have, we fail, and ſin in the Manner of our Performance. It is poſſible, by the grace of God, for the Faithful to keep all God's Commands, for the Matter of them in a true ſenſe; yet, ſeeing we very often fail in the right Way and Manner of our Performance of them, either in Prayer or any other Duty, we ſin, and ought to be humbled for it, daily confeſs it, repent of it, and ask forgiveneſs of God, in the Name of Chriſt Jeſus.

Commandments and Ordinances. By *Ordinances*, are underſtood all the Ceremonial and Levitical Precepts of the Law, called in *Heb.* 9. 1. *Ordinances of Service* pertaining to the Temple-Worſhip, and all the Rites and Shadows of the Law, ſo far as concerned them. *By Commandments*, are not only underſtood the Ten Precepts of the Moral Law, but all the poſitive Precepts of revealed Religion, ſo far as was diſcovered unto them in the Old Teſtament, and eſpecially Faith in the promiſed Meſſiah, for remiſſion of Sin, and the Faith and Hope of the Reſurrection of the Dead, which the Faithful then had, as really as Believers now have, though not ſo fully and clearly revealed.

Blameleſs. Nor will this prove that they had attain'd a ſinleſs Perfection, as ſome would infer; the Greek word ſignifieth unreproachable, or without any crime or ſcandalous Practice: we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt a *Crime* and *a Fault*; perſons may be, and oft are *Crimeleſs*, that yet are not altogether *Faultleſs*.

Having thus far opened the Words, I ſhall obſerve to you ſome profitable Doctrines and Inſtructions, that follow by way of Corollary, and Conſequence from them. Which I do for a particular Reaſon, which ye ſhall afterwards know, not ſo much with reſpect to moſt here, but with reſpect to ſome Stran-

Strangers, and ſome of my Friends, to whom I judge theſe Obſervations that I am about to give may be of ſervice.

The firſt is this: That in a very corrupt ſtate of a Church, there may and have been found, ſome excellently holy and righteous perſons.

The ſecond is this: That holy and righteous perſons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not ſeparate from it, if it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, notwithſtanding the Corruption of perſons that may be in it. Suppoſe they who are ſo corrupt are the greateſt number, and if nothing that is ſinful be enjoyned, or impos'd upon them, they may and ought to joyn with them in the publick Acts of God's Worſhip, notwithſtanding the Corruptions of particular perſons belonging to that Church, in ſome things both of Doctrine and Practice.

The third is this: That perſons eminently holy and ſpiritual, have joyned, and conſequently may joyn, with the body of a Congregation in the publick Worſhip of God, with Prayer and Thankſgiving, in the uſe of ſet Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving, with joint vocal Praying and Singing with the Multitude, without ſinning in their ſo doing as to the Matter of the Worſhip, as above explained, and without any hurt to their inward and ſpiritual ſtate and frame of Mind, or quenching the Spirit.

To all theſe three I intend particularly to ſpeak; and they will be found to flow very naturally, at leaſt by way of Corollary, from the words of the Text.

To the firſt. The ſtate of the Church of the Jews at this time, to which the words of the Text relate, was very cor-

rupt: Some of them believ'd not the Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the dead, as the *Sadducees:* The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had corrupted the true ſenſe of the Law with their falſe Gloſſes in divers things, as is clear from our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, wherein he tacitely ſo chargeth them, and from other places, where he manifeſtly and expreſly ſo doth, as *Matth.* 15. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. Alſo their Practices were very corrupt: though they made long Prayers, they devour'd Widows Houſes. The High Prieſts were not at this very time of the Poſterity of *Aaron*, nor yet of the Tribe of *Levi*, and baſe Arts were uſed to attain to the Dignity of the High Prieſthood; and the generality of the People at this very time were very formal, rude, and ignorant, and many of them vicious: yet for all this, here were two moſt eminently holy and righteous perſons in one Houſe. And another Inſtance is, *Joſeph* and *Mary* the Mother of our Lord; alſo that good Old-man *Simeon*, and *Anna* who ſerved God with Faſting and Prayer day and night in the Temple; *Nathaniel*, in whom was no guile; *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, a juſt Man: and all theſe were before our Saviour's Preaching, and poſſibly ſome were ſo before *John*'s Preaching. Now theſe excellent Perſons, ſo eminently pious, did not ſeparate from the Temple-Worſhip, and make up a Church by themſelves, but remain'd in external Communion with the mixt Multitude; nor did either *John* the *Baptiſt*, or our bleſſed Lord, ſet up any ſeparate Communion from the Jewiſh Church during the whole time of their Miniſtery: our Saviour frequented the Temple and the Synagogues, read out of the Old Teſtament, and preach'd in the Synagogues. Nor did *John*'s Preaching in the Wilderneſs, and Chriſt's Preaching ſometimes in the Wilderneſs, and ſometimes on a Mountain, at other times by the Sea-ſide, prove that they made any Schiſm or Separation from the Jewiſh Church, ſeeing they frequented the publick Worſhip, and obſerved all the Ordinances of the Law; for Chriſt came to fulfil the Law, and did accordingly fulfill

fulfill it in all points in his own Perſon, and that for our ſake. It was an allowed common Practice at that time, and long before, as well as after, among the Jews, for particular perſons, who profeſs'd to have Knowledge of the Law, and of divine Myſteries, to gather Diſciples and Proſelytes to them, whom they taught apart, and theſe were called Rabbies, that is, Maſters, who did aſſume to themſelves, and their Doctrines and Words, not only an Authority equal, but ſuperiour to the Holy Scriptures (as can be proved out of the Rabbinical Authors;) for which cauſe our Saviour did ſharply, and moſt juſtly, reprehend them, not ſimply for the Name Rabbi or Maſter, but for their Pride and high Conceit of themſelves, boaſting in their knowledge, though they were greatly ignorant and unſound: for which cauſe our Saviour bid his Diſciples beware of the Leaven of the *Phariſees*, by which he meant their Doctrine, to wit, ſuch Doctrine as they taught, as their private Opinions, and Expoſitions of the Law, which they did not teach as ſitting in *Moſes* Chair; for what they taught according to the Law of *Moſes*, the People were to hear them, as Chriſt commanded; they were to do as they ſaid (out of *Moſes* Chair) but not as they did. Had either our Saviour or his Diſciples abſented from the Publick Worſhip at the Temple, no doubt they would have made it a great matter of Accuſation againſt him; but this they neither did, nor could juſtly do, becauſe he did every thing that was enjoined according to the Law, and not only frequented the Temple, but the Synagogues, together with the People that met together to pray, eſpecially in the Temple: and ſo no doubt it was the practice of *Zacharias* and *Eliſabeth*, to pray with the People, as it is ſaid *Luke* 1. *ver.* 10. and the whole Multitude of the People were praying without, at the time of Incenſe; but at that time *Zacharias* was performing his Office in the holy place, called the inner Court, his lot falling ſo to be in courſe.

But to go farther backward, How many Inſtances have we in the days of *Moſes*, and the ſucceeding Prophets, what Sons of *Belial* were among that People, whom yet God owned to be his People, and did not reject them from being his Church, even when they rebelled againſt him in the Wilderneſs. They are called the Church, *Acts* 7. 38, 39.

To the ſecond, That holy and righteous Perſons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not ſeparate from it. If it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, though there may be Corruptions both as to Doctrine and Practice in the ſame, if nothing that is ſinful be impoſed or enjoyned to them. That they did not ſeparate, is already proved; and that they did not ſin in remaining in the external Communion of the Church, but that they did what was commanded, in continuing with the multitude in the Publick Worſhip, is alſo clear from the words of the Text; for had they ſinned in continuing in that external Communion, and joyning with them in the Publick Worſhip, they ſhould not have had this great Commendation given them here in the words of the Text, that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God*; whereof their worſhipping God in the Temple with the multitude, was a part. And had it been any Sin to have joyned with the Multitude in the Publick Worſhip, Chriſt, who never knew Sin, had not countenanced it: He forbid the People indeed to follow their blind Guides, telling them, *If the blind follow the blind, both muſt fall into the ditch.* But this was only forbidding to follow them in receiving their blind and falſe Doctrine.

This I the rather inſiſt upon, becauſe of divers I know are here, who are not of the Church of *England*; ſome of whom God hath made me inſtrumental in his great Mercy, to bring off from the vile Errours of Quakeriſm; yet it remains

mains a Scruple with them to join with the Church of *England*, becauſe, as is affirmed by many, ſhe is Corrupt, at leaſt with reſpect to the Practice of many, called her Members; they think to join in any part of the Worſhip of God with ſuch corrupt Perſons, is a ſin, and will defile them. The contrary whereof, they may perceive from what I have ſaid upon the Suppoſition, That the preſent State of the Church were as corrupt as the State of the *Jews* then was; but I am far from thinking, that the Church is ſuch: I am well perſuaded, that ſhe doth incomparably excel it in many reſpects, and is to be preferred to any I know in the World, having many more excellently and eminently holy Perſons in her Communion than the *Jewiſh* Church then had; for though there were ſome in the *Jewiſh* Church very eminently Holy, yet ſo far as we find on Record, they were but few in number. Notwithſtanding *John*'s Preaching, who preach'd with great Zeal and Power; and our Saviour's Preaching, *who ſpake as never Man ſpake*, yet, even at the Day of Pentecoſt, they were but an Hundred and twenty in Number; but I charitably believe, there are many Thouſands of eminently holy and pious Perſons in her Communion. And for ſuch as are openly Vicious, that appear in her Publick Aſſemblies, it may be ſaid as St. *Paul* ſaid of *Iſrael*, *They are not all Iſrael who are called Iſrael*: It is that which happens to all Communions, that there is a mixt Auditory that frequent their Aſſemblies; and as Chriſt hath taught us, the Kingdom of God, that is, the viſibe State of the Church, is like to five Wiſe Virgins and five Fooliſh; and there will be Tares and Chaff among the good Seed and Corn, until the Harveſt; and that is the end of the World.

To the Third, That Perſons eminently holy and ſpiritual, may and ought to join with with the Publick Prayers of the Church, notwithſtanding of the Corruptions

tions of particular Members, as above-mentioned, and proved, when they pray in Set-Forms, and with joint Voices. This many can leaſt of all digeſt, being prejudiced againſt all Set-Forms of Prayer, however ſo found and good, yea, againſt the praying the Lord's Prayer; as conceiving that all ſuch manner of Prayer will quench the Spirit, and ſtifle, and quite kill and extinguiſh all ſpiritual Life and Motions in them.

I freely confeſs, I have been ſo prejudiced my ſelf againſt all Set-Forms of Prayer, having the ſame Conceit that I find others now have; but I bleſs God, I not only have ſeen the Errour of that, but have found by true Experience, that to join with the Faithful in the Publick Prayers, in Set-Forms of ſound Words, is ſo far from being any hurt, or cauſe to kill and extinguiſh ſpiritual Life in the Soul, that I have found my very Heart and Soul ſpiritually Refreſhed and Comforted in joining therewith; and I thank God, that I can, and do with great inward Freedom, Peace and Satisfaction, both pray and praiſe God with you. And, that which hinders any to find it ſo, is the deep Prejudice they have let in againſt the way of praying by Forms, being miſ-inform'd by their Teachers.

Beſide what I have ſaid on a former Occaſion in another place, I will at preſent give you two places of Scripture, to prove, That it was the Way and Manner of the Publick Worſhip of God in the *Jewiſh* Church, for the People to pray with their Voice jointly; the one place is in *Iſaiah* 29. 13. *Foraſmuch as this People draw near with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart far from me*, &c. It plainly appears from this, what was the Manner of the Publick Worſhip of God in the *Jewiſh* Church, in the Days of *Iſaiah* and the other Prophets, that the Peo-

People prayed with the Minister or Priest vocally with Mouth and Lips; God did not blame them simply for this, but that while they gave him the external part of Worship with their Mouths and Lips; they gave him not the internal also, without which the external is not acceptable; they gave him not their Heart, but removed it far from him. This was too general among them; but yet, neither *Isaiah*, nor any others of the Faithful who were mingled among them, and served God sincerely both with Heart and Mouth, did separate from the Publick Worship. This same place is quoted, and applyed by our Saviour against the Scribes and Pharisees, their hypocritical Prayers with their Mouths and Lips, *Matth.* 15. 7, 8. *Mark* 7. 6.

If any say, this is not to be understood of their praying in the Publick Worship with vocal Prayer, but in their private Devotions. To this I Answer: 1*st*, This is meerly alledged, but not proved. 2*dly*, The contrary can be proved; for if Persons are to pray vocally with their Mouths in private, for as good reason, they are to pray vocally with their Mouths in publick, the external part of Worship being commanded as well as the internal, in publick as well as in private. Though in Men's private Devotions, they are not to pray as to be heard of others, as the Pharisees did whom Christ reproved; yet they may pray as *Hannah* did, 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. Now *Hannah*, she spake in her Heart, only her Lips moved, but her Voice was not heard. In Publick Worship there is this Difference, that our Voice is to be heard, that others may know that we pray the same Prayer with them.

The other place is *Nehem.* 9. 4, 5. *Then stood up upon the stairs of the Levites Jeshua and Bani*, &c. *and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God*, being in number eight Persons particularly named; and Ver. 5. *Then the Levites, Jeshua and*

and Kadmiel, Bani, &c. *ſaid* [unto the People] *Stand up, and bleſs the Lord your God for ever and ever, and bleſſed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe.* And then the People with the Levites, as is clear from ver. 2. and 3. joined in vocal Prayer with them; for it is ſaid, ver. 2. *And the ſeed of Iſrael ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, and ſtood and confeſs'd their ſins, and the iniquities of their fathers:* and ver. 3. *One fourth part of the day they read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, and another fourth part they confeſſed and worſhipped the Lord their God.* And thus they began, and went on together, from ver. 5. to the end of that Chapter, ſaying, *Bleſſed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe: thou, even thou, art Lord alone, thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hoſt, the earth, and all things that are therein, the ſeas, and all that is therein; and thou preſerveſt them all, and the hoſt of heaven worſhippeth thee,* &c. That ancient excellent Hymn which is a part of the Church of *England*'s Liturgy, compos'd above twelve hundred years ago, as is probably thought by St. *Ambroſe*, which begins, *We praiſe thee, O God,* &c. doth very much reſemble this, in *Exord* and *Preface.*

By the Scriptures above cited, and divers others that might be cited, it plainly appears, that the People had a part with the Miniſter in the external part of God's Worſhip, praying vocally together with him; and that they did ſo, as being their Duty, and in Obedience to God's Command, to whom we owe as well the external Worſhip of our Bodies as the internal Worſhip of our Souls; ſeeing we owe to him the Creation of our Souls and Bodies, and the Preſervation of both, and all our Bleſſings both inward and outward; and he hath redeemed both by the precious Blood of Chriſt; therefore we are to glorifie him both with our Souls and with our Bodies, which are his, and to offer up unto him the Calves of our Lips, *Hoſ.* 14. 2. andthe Fruit of our Lips, *Heb.* 13. 15.

And

And as ſo to do is a Commanded Duty, ſo it is a great Favour and Privilege, that God Almighty has beſtow'd upon all his People; that they call upon him Vocally with their Mouths and Lips, jointly, as well as with their Hearts and Spirits: And therefore whoever by their Doctrine teach People that they ſhould not do ſo, commit a Twofold Evil:

Firſt, That they deny and take away that Honour that is due to God from the People, by this way of Worſhipping him in Prayer and Thankſgiving, with their Mouths and Lips, as well as with their Hearts; what God hath put together, they ought not to put aſunder.

Secondly, They deprive the People of the high Favour and Privilege that he has beſtow'd upon them, to allow them to ſpeak unto him (not always by a Proxy, or the Mouth of another, but) by their own Mouths; for God's People, both under the Old and New Teſtament, is called by him a Royal Prieſthood, who offer up unto him their Sacrifices, and have a near Acceſs to him, through their great High-Prieſt *Jeſus Chriſt*, their and our alone Mediator. Under the Old Teſtament there was this Order: Firſt, The High-Prieſt was concerned in ſome parts of God's Service that were proper and peculiar to him; in which reſpect he was (ſo to ſpeak) neareſt to God. Secondly, The Prieſts were concerned in ſome parts of God's Service proper and peculiar to them, which did not belong to the *Levites*; and they were in the next degree of Nearneſs. Thirdly, The *Levites* were concerned in ſome parts of God's Service proper to them, which did not belong to the People. Fourthly, and Laſtly, There was a part of God's Service that was common to the People, with all the other Three; and that was to Worſhip God together, jointly, with Vocal Prayer and Thankſgiving, together with them; as being in all theſe Four degrees a Holy and Royal Prieſthood unto God, to offer up together their Sacrifices unto him; in which reſpect they were a People near unto him, above all other Nations; as it is written *Deut.* 4. 7. *For what nation is there ſo great, who hath*

God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

It proceeds from great Ignorance, that the Name of a Prieſt is ſo much reproached by many who call themſelves Chriſtians; they think they cannot call a Man by a greater Name of Contempt, than to call him *Prieſt*; whereas the Name is Honourable, though it be abuſively given to many that are not worthy of it: Our Bleſſed Lord Himſelf is called *Prieſt* frequently in Scripture, and is the High-Prieſt of our Profeſſion; and not only they who miniſter the Word and Sacraments, but the whole Body of the Faithful, are a Royal Prieſthood unto God, to whom ſome part of God's Service doth belong, as that of Prayer and Thankſgiving, both with Heart and Mouth, and in Spirit and Truth, that is acceptable unto God through Jeſus Chriſt. The Greek word that is Tranſlated *Prieſt* in Engliſh, is ἱερεύς, from ἱερός, i. e. *holy*, which ſignifieth one that is converſant, or exerciſed in holy things, to wit, in the holy Service of God; a ſpecial part of which is Prayer and Thankſgiving, both with the Heart and Mouth, that belongs to the whole Congregation of God's People, who are a Holy and Royal Prieſthood unto him.

In

In the Afternoon.

LUKE I. 6. *And they were both Righteous*, &c.

THAT I may with the greater Clearneſs Anſwer to certain Objections that ſome will be ready to make againſt what I have above delivered, I will here Anſwer a Weighty Queſtion.

Q. *By what Power or Ability did theſe two Eminently virtuous Perſons, and all others under the Old Teſtament, walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God? And particularly by what Ability did they Worſhip God in their Prayers and Thankſgivings?*

Anſ. By the ſame Power and Ability of the Holy Spirit, and his Saving and Sanctifying Gifts and Graces, by which the Faithful under the New Teſtament did walk in all God's Commandments, and ſerve him with Prayers and Thankſgivings: For as the Church of God is one and the ſame Collective Body of a Church for ſubſtance, both under the Old and New Teſtament, however otherwiſe differing in reſpect of the various Adminiſtrations, and other Circumſtances: So the Spirit is one that did and doth inſpire both, enlighten, quicken, and enable the Faithful in both, to perform their reſpective Duties and Services.

I ſhall now only bring you Two places of Scripture to prove, That the Church of the *Jews*, under the Old Teſtament, had the Holy Spirit given them, as well as the Church hath it now given under the New Teſtament: The One is *Nehem.* 9 20.

Thou gaveſt alſo thy good ſpirit to inſtruct them, and with-heldeſt not thy Manna from their mouth, and gaveſt them water for their thirſt. If any ſay, The Spirit was given to them in the Prophets, but not in themſelves. I Anſwer; As it was given to the Prophets by Extraordinary Inſpiration and Prophecy, ſo it was given to the People by Ordinary Inſpiration, to enable them both to believe and underſtand what the Prophets taught, and alſo to practice what God by the Prophets commanded them. And that this was as univerſally given to them inwardly, as the Manna and the Water was to them outwardly, is evident from the words quoted; I ſay, given and offered to them on God's part, though properly received by none but the Faithful on their part, as the Manna and Water was given to them all; yet if any would not eat the Manna, nor drink the Water, they would have periſhed for all that. The Other place of Scripture is *Iſaiah* 59. 21. *This is my Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord; My ſpirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeeds ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.*

This Covenant is the Covenant of Grace that God has made with Chriſt, and through him with all Believers, from the beginning to the end of the World, who are his Seed, and Seed's ſeed; and this Covenant is the ſame for ſubſtance in all Ages, as well under the Old Teſtament, as under the New, and hath the ſame Promiſes as to the main and chiefeſt things, to wit, Forgiveneſs of Sin, for Chriſt's ſake, and the Holy Spirit, with his Saving-Gifts and Graces (to ſanctify them, and enable them to ſerve God acceptably) and Eternal Life and Salvation. And the Faith that they had who lived under the Old Teſtament, and ſerved God acceptably, is one and the ſame with the Faith of ſincere Chriſtians under the New Teſtament, differing but in ſome Circumſtances; they believed in him that was to come; we believe in him that is come; they believed that the Blood of Chriſt, the Promiſed Meſſiah, and Seed of the Woman, ſhould

be

be ſhed for the Remiſſion of their Sins; of which they were taught and kept in remembrance by the Blood of the Sacrifices, which was a Type of that moſt excellent and efficacious Sacrifice of Chriſt's Body and Blood, that was to be ſhed for them; and we believe that his Blood hath been ſhed for us, and that Chriſt our Paſſover and Sacrifice is ſlain for us: They had the ſame Object and Foundation of Faith and Hope that we have, but not ſo explicitly and clearly revealed; it is ſaid, *Heb.* 11. *Theſe all died in faith; and by faith they walked with God, and looked for a City which had foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God; and ſought the heavenly Country, and confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth,* Heb. 11. 9, 10, 13, 14, 16.

It is therefore a great error in them, who think that the Church under the Old Teſtament, was a Carnal Church, and their Worſhip altogether carnal; their Faith a Carnal Faith, having only Carnal Promiſes, and Carnal and Earthly things only promiſed to them; for all the Faithful under that Diſpenſation had the ſame Spiritual things, and Promiſes, and Worſhip that true Chriſtians now have. It is alſo a great Error in them who now ſay and teach, that there is no abſolute need of any ſpecial help or aid of the Holy Spirit, by ſpecial Divine Influence to help or aſſiſt us in obeying God's Commands, and to worſhip him acceptably, which was the old *Pelagian* Hereſie that is revived in many hereaway, and elſewhere.

What I have above ſaid is ſufficient to anſwer that Objection, that many I know do make againſt Set Forms of Prayer now under the New-Teſtament; they will grant that the Church in the Publick Worſhip of God, had ſet Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving under the Old-Teſtament; but they deny that therefore it follows, that the Church ſhould have them under the New-Teſtament, becauſe the Worſhip then was Carnal, but now it is Spiritual; they had carnal Commandments, and carnal Ordinances; but the Church under the New-Teſtament is a Spiritual Houſe, the Worſhip and Ordinances Spiritual; and

by

by the like way of arguing, they ſay, Though the Church under the Old-Teſtament had many Corruptions, and a great mixture of corrupt Members, yet it is not ſo under the New-Teſtament.

To both which, what is aboveſaid may ſufficiently anſwer. The Worſhip of God, which the Church of God under the Old Teſtament performed, as with reſpect to the Faithful, was a Spiritual Worſhip, and that Worſhip was required of them as truly then, as it is required now; God then required the Heart, as well as now, and blamed them who drew near to him with the Mouth, but had removed their Hearts far away from him, as is above ſhewed. The Ceremonial Precepts of the Law, that were the Figures and Shadows, were called carnal Ordinances, in reſpect of the many outward things that were carnal, that were enjoined to them, but not in reſpect of the inward Habit and Frame of their Hearts and Minds, for that was required to be ſpiritual, and was ſpiritual in all the Faithful: And although it is granted, that comparatively the Church under the New-Teſtament, in reſpect of the generality, was to be more ſpiritual, having the Promiſes of greater meaſures of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, than the Church under the Old Teſtament had; yet with reſpect to many Particulars, they far exceeded any of us in Spirituality; yet theſe moſt eminently holy and virtuous Perſons went always with the Multitude, and joined with them in the Publick Worſhip of God; while (as to the matter of it) it was according to what God had commanded, as it generally was, excepting ſome particular caſes.

And as I have above ſhewed, that the State of the Church under the Old Teſtament, did conſiſt of a great mixture, and had great Corruptions in it, which yet was no cauſe or ground of ſeparation to the Faithful, who ſtill continued among them; I ſhall now ſhew the like in divers Churches in the New Teſtament, who yet were owned of God to be true Churches.

Many

Many in the Churches of the *Galatians* were greatly corrupted in the Doctrine of Juſtification, and divers other things, yet *Paul* did not diſown them to be a Church, nor bid them ſeparate or divide. In the Church of *Corinth* divers of them denied the Reſurrection of the Body, as is clear from 1 *Cor.* 15. and had divers great Failings in their Practice, and were very irregular in the manner of receiving the Lord's Supper, and did receive it unworthily; yea ſome were drunk, which was a very bad preparation to that Holy Ordinance; yet he bid them not ſeparate, and ſet up a diſtinct Communion, but ſharply blames them for the Diviſions that were among them.

He bid them indeed come out from among Unbelievers, and be ſeparate from them, and to purge out the old Leaven; but all this reſpects the right adminiſtration of Diſcipline in the Church; ſcandalous Perſons ought to be regularly dealt with, and proceeded againſt; and if they prove obſtinate after due admonition, they are to be excommunicated, whether the Crime be of Hereſie, or evil practice: But the Power of Excommunication doth not belong to private Perſons in the Church, but to the Rulers and Governors that God hath ſet up in the Church. If any in the Church offend you with their ſcandalous Practices, ye ought firſt to admoniſh them; and if they regard it not, nor amend, ye ought to inform againſt them to the Miniſter, and the Miniſter ought to inform to the Biſhop; and if he neglect his Duty, he muſt anſwer to God for it: But in the mean time ye ought not to forſake the Church for the default of particular Perſons in it; what cannot be amended, muſt be born, unleſs there be a general Apoſtacy or Corruption in the Fundamentals of the Chriſtian Faith, or in Scandalous Practices; which, bleſſed be God, is not our caſe in this Church, where the Doctrine is ſound, and the Lives and Converſations of many agreeable to the Goſpel; and for ſuch who are ſcandalous, though they frequent the Publick Aſſemblies, as they do in all External Communions, why may not the Excuſe that ſerves for one, ſerve for another? that is (ſay they) though they come among us, yet they are not of us.

We

We find in the Book of the *Revelations*, that five at leaſt of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, that St. *John* writ unto, were ſeverely reproved, and eſpecially the Angels; *i. e.* the Governors of theſe Churches, for ſuffering things which they ought not to have ſuffered, or for their ſlackneſs and remiſneſs in what belonged to them. The Church of *Sardis* is not blamed for Corruption in Doctrine, but for her Formality, and defect of good Works; yet ſhe is owned to be a true Church, by the Spirit of God in *John*. A Church as well as other things receive the denomination, ſometimes *à potiore parte*; *i. e.* from the better part, and not always from the greater part; the few Names in *Sardis*, that had not defiled their Garments, gave her the denomination of a Church, even by the Spirit of God; nor did the Defilements of many, or the greater number that were joined together in the External Communion, or profeſſion of Membership, defile thoſe other that were ſincere.

The uſe of this is of great ſervice to inſtruct thoſe who think they cannot be joined in an External Communion with any Society of People profeſſing Chriſtianity, that hath any ſcandalous Profeſſors among them, but they muſt be defiled with them; the Prayers of the one ſort will hinder the Prayers of the ſincere from being accepted; If they partake with them at the Lord's Supper, who are not ſo regular and exact as they are, they think they are defiled with them, they think they are forbidden to partake in the Lord's Supper with them; for which ſome bring, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *If any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous*, &c. *with ſuch a one no not to eat*; but it is a miſtake, that by eating there is meant eating at the Lord's Supper; I agree with them who judge 'twas not that, but ordinary eating: So that they were forbidden to have particular Converſation with ſuch, yet they were not to forſake the Church becauſe of them; but if they knew ſuch, to make a regular complaint, that due and regular Diſcipline might be exerciſed towards them.

And

And the like Miſtake they fall into, who argue from 2 *Tim.* 3. 4, 5. where the Apoſtle bids *Timothy* turn away from ſuch as were vicious Perſons, and had a Form of Godlineſs, but denied the Power thereof; that therefore none that are ſincerely godly ought to remain in External Communion with that Church where there are any ſuch vicious Perſons. But they ſhould conſider to whom this is directed, to *Timothy*, who was Biſhop of *Epheſus*, to whom it belonged by his Epiſcopal Office to reject ſuch, and turn them away (as the *Greek* word will bear it) or turn them out of the Church, even as the Civil Magiſtrate is to turn vicous perſons, that deſerve it, out of the City; but this doth not belong to private perſons, they have no power to puniſh, either with baniſhment or death, Criminal perſons how much ſoeve they deſerve it: Even ſo it belongs wholto Eccleſiaſtick Officers, to reject and caſt out ſcandalous perſons; and if they do it not, it is their ſin, if they have due information or notice of them: But yet that is no warrant for any to forſake the Communion of the Church. There were not only great defaults in the Church of the *Jews*, among private perſons, but in the Eccleſiaſtick Rulers at divers times, and remiſneſs of Diſcipline, which the true Prophets reproved them for, yet they did not ſeprate from them.

So long as a Society of people profeſſing Chriſtianity, has the true Notes of a Church, and that nothing ſinful in the matter of Worſhip is enjoined or impos'd upon any, we ought not to ſeparate from ſuch a Church. But this gives no ſtength to the Church of *Rome* to charge us with Schiſm for our ſeparation from her, becauſe ſhe enjoins many ſinful things to be practiſed by her Members, in the Worſhip of God, which no good Chriſtian ought to practiſe; and there is a general Corruption both in Doctrine and Practiſe in her profeſſed Members; yet we ought to diſtinguiſh betwixt the corrupt Faction prevailing in the Church, and others that may, and do there remain, that are not of them: We are to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Babylon* and the Church of God in *Babylon*, and betwixt *the Temple of God*, and *Antichriſt ſitting in the Temple of God*. The people of God are

commanded to come out of *Babylon*, *Rev.* 18. 4. which proves he had and hath a people in *Babylon*, even Myſtical *Babylon*, that is, the corrupt ſtate of the Church of *Rome*.

The Church of God hath not utterly failed during all the time of the great Apoſtacy and Defection, that hath prevailed over many, otherwiſe Chriſt's Promiſe had failed, *That the gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt her*: And as ſhe hath continued, ſo an outward Miniſtry of the Word hath continued alſo, by which ſhe hath been fed and nouriſhed; for God never fed his Church in any Age, without the outward Word and Doctrine, and without ſome outward Miniſtry; which therefore notwithſtanding of ſome Corruptions that might be generally among them, and in the better and purer ſort of them, did not hinder, but that their Miniſtry did good, and fed many; while they taught the Fundamentals and Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, together with ſome Errors, though very hurtful, yet not Fundamental, God might and did make the more pure part of the Doctrine they preached, an Antidote againſt the more impure and hurtful; like the Pottage that had ſome poiſonous Herb in it, and when it was told the Prophet *Eliſha*, *There is death in the Pot*, yet by the word of the Lord, they might and did eat without harm. Though there is great danger of ſalvation in the Church of *Rome*, yet few ſo uncharitable among *Proteſtants*, that will ſay, that ſalvation's impoſſible to any of them: *Calvin* that famous Reformer, was of another mind, and ſaid plainly, *That God could ſave even in Babylon*. But that's no argument, nor encouragement to any to hold communion with her.

But in the enquiry, Which Church we ought to join with, while there are ſo many various cries, *Lo here, and lo there*; we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt a Church that has the Eſſentials, and a Church that has not only them, but the Integrals; and ſurely the Church that is the moſt compleat and intire, both for Eſſentials and Integrals in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government, neareſt approaching to the Scripture-Pattern, and the next Ages to the Apoſtles; when it is confeſſed, there was the greateſt

eſt purity; that is the Church that ought to be preferr'd, and that (upon the beſt ſearch and enquiry that I could make, with reading and meditation in the Holy Scriptures, Prayer and Conference, and obſervation of Things and Perſons) I found to be the *Church* of *England*; where I find not only the Doctrine to be ſound (as is confeſſed by the Diſſenters generally), but that the matter and manner of Worſhip is moſt agreeable to Scripture, and where the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments and Ordination to the Miniſtry is moſt agreeable to Scripture, and more than any where that I can find among all the ſeveral Sects of them. I ſpeak not this to exaſperate any, I am put upon my defence and apology in the caſe; Not only many of the People called *Quakers*, but others cry out againſt me for joining with the *Church of England*, which I thank God I have done with great inward ſatisfaction, and peace of Conſcience; and I think I can give to any that are impartial, and without prejudice, a reaſonable account of my ſo doing. It is ſuggeſted againſt me, That I have received Ordination into the Church of *England* for a worldly Living; like ſome that ſaid, *Put me into the Prieſts Office, that I may eat a piece of Bread:* But I pray God forgive them for their uncharitableneſs. The ſearcher of hearts knows, that no worldly thing hath been my Motive or end in what I have done; but finding that God hath been graciouſly pleaſed to bleſs my poor endeavours with ſome ſucceſs, even to ſome here in *England*, as well as to others in *America*, to have been an inſtrument to bring them off from the vile Errors of *Quakeriſm*, I found my ſelf further concerned; and I hope I can, and dare ſay, moved and inclined by the bleſſed Spirit of God, to endeavour to bring them further onwards; that is to ſay, not only to be convinced, that Baptiſm and the Supper are the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, which many of them are well convinced of, but to ſubmit to them in practice; and divers of them have deſired me to adminiſter Baptiſm unto them; which I told them I could not do without External Ordination; for that there ought to be an outward Order and Government in the Church of Chriſt, as well as the inward of the Spirit.

The Faith and Hope which God had given me, that as he had bleſſed my Labours with ſome ſucceſs for ſome years paſt, in exerciſing my Giſt as a Catechiſt among ſome people, in reducing them from their groſſeſt Errors, that he would further bleſs my Endeavours, not only to them, but to others, in a more general Service, together with the inward clearneſs and ſatisfaction I found in my Conſcience, and not any worldly reſpect, was the Motive and Encouragement that enclin'd me to receive Ordination in the Church of *England*, which I knew not where to find ſo regular any where elſe

I thank God, I am not put ſo hard to it for Bread, but that I have ſufficient at preſent, by Divine Providence, *without that they call a Living*, and I ſeek and aim at no great things in the World. But it is great Ignorance and Prejudice in many that think, Whoever have a comfortable Living or Maintenance who Preach the Goſpel, muſt be Hirelings, and Mercenary, muſt ſell the Goſpel for Money, muſt be Covetous, and tranſgreſs Chriſt's Command, that ſaid, *Freely ye have received, freely give*; it is one thing to have a Goſpel-maintenance, and another thing to Preach for it. Goſpel-Miniſters may and do Preach the Goſpel freely, and yet have a Goſpel-maintenance, that is, the free Giſt of the People, given by them, for moſt part many Ages paſt, for that uſe, and alſo given and appointed by Chriſtian Magiſtrates. The greateſt Temporals can bear no proportion with the leaſt of Spirituals, ſo as that Spirituals neither can nor ought to be ſold. It is alſo great Ignorance in them that ſay, Paying and receiving Tythes is a denying of Chriſt come in the Fleſh; arguing, That it was a part of the Ceremonial Law. But Firſt, That they have not proved, nor, I think, can they prove. Secondly, Suppoſe the manner of paying Tythes to the *Levitical* Prieſthood was Ceremonial, yet that will not infer, that to pay a Tenth, that is freely given by the firſt Owners to ſupport a Goſpel-Miniſtry, is Ceremonial, ſeeing it is to a different end, and in a different manner; Things and Actions are ſpecified from their ends. We may as well argue the *Quakers* coming up yearly

ly to *London* in ſo great Numbers at the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, which they obſerve with ſo great Solemnity above any other day that I know, is a denying of Chriſt come in the Fleſh; for the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt* was Ceremonial: If they ſay, they keep it not to that end and intent that the *Jews* kept it; the like Anſwer will ſerve them that either give or receive Tythes; They neither give nor receive them to uphold a Levitical Prieſthood, but to ſupport a Goſpel-Miniſtry. And by the like Argument they uſe againſt Tythes, we may argue againſt them, That they are not to kill a Beaſt to eat it, becauſe the Prieſts under the Law did kill the clean Beaſts for a Sacrifice, which partly they did alſo eat of. Here we ſee one and the ſame Action, having differing ends, may be, and is lawful, when done for one end, and unlawful when done for another. They do as igrorantly argue, that Tythes are the Foundation of their Goſpel who take Tythes; becauſe (ſay they) take away the Tythes, and other Maintenances, and their Goſpel will ceaſe; ſo take away all Meat and Drink from the *Quakers* Miniſters, and their Miniſtry will as much ceaſe; is therefore their Meat and Drink the Foundation of their Miniſtry? The greateſt uſe and ſervice that either Tythes, or any other Maintenance given to the Miniſtry has, is no more, but what the dead and dry Sticks or Stakes put in the Ground, have to ſupport the Vines in Vineyards, that they may be fruitful; they receive no moiſture nor virtue from the Sticks, but from the Earth wherein they are planted.

Thus they have deceived many, and expoſed them by falſe Perſuaſions and Arguments to divers Sufferings, which they have taught them to call Perſecution, for detaining the Tythes which are not their own, and which they have no right to detain. All is not Perſecution which is called Perſecution; That Liberty is granted to tender Conſciences, that hold the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, and are of a peaceable Converſation and Spirit, I well approve of: Perſecution generally hardens People in their Errors, rather than that it reforms them. But a

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boundleſs Liberty, without any reſtraint, to Ranters, and open Blaſphemers againſt God and Chriſt, and groſs Lyars, and falſe Prophets, who with their Lyes and falſe Prophecies hurt people in their outward Eſtates, is of a dangerous Conſequence. In *Deut.* 13. the Leſſon of this day now read, *Falſe Prophets, that taught the people to go after other Gods, and to ſerve them, were to be put to death*; that is, ſuch as ſhould ariſe among themſelves. But this did not concern the Heathens: And as concerning Chriſtians, if any ſhall ariſe among them that ſhall teach open Blaſphemy againſt God and Chriſt, as the Ranters did, ſhould they be tolerated? An Eminent Diſſenter hath * made this Obſervation on the vaſt Toleration that was given in the Time of the Commonwealth-Government, "That the Seven years Toleration then given, had done "more hurt to Religion, than all that could be called Perſecu-"tion for Seventy years before that.

* Dr. *Caudry*, a Presbyterian Miniſter, in his Book called *Independency a Schiſm.*

I acknowledge Perſecution, properly and truly underſtood, (that is, when any ſuffer for Truth and Righteouſneſs) is a great Sin; but every degree of Perſecution, acted by a Factious and prevailing Party in a Church, doth not unchurch them until it comes to a great heighth (nor did unchurch the Church of *Rome*, ſimply for that) as is clear from *Matt.* 21. 33, to 43. *The husbandmen that ſtoned ſome and killed others of their Lord's ſervants, were not caſt out of the Vineyard until they had killed the heir himſelf.* The People of *Jeruſalem* did in the foregoing Ages evil intreat the Lord's Prophets, and kill them, as Chriſt charged them, ſaying, *O Jeruſalem, that killeſt the Prophets*, Matth. 23. 37. Yet God did not caſt them off from being his Church; for he beareth long with a People before he utterly caſt them off.

All the other Diſſenters (the *Presbyterians* excepted) have no Ordination to the Miniſtry by any Authority, either of Biſhops or Presbyters, but reject all pretence to both, [which I judge to be an Error in them] the *Presbyterians* here in *England*,

land commonly derive their Ordination by or through the Line of Proteſtant Biſhops, whom they look upon to have been of God's raiſing up, to reform from Popery; and if their Ordination was valid to them, it is ſtill valid to others, and to me. And as for the Line of Succeſſion ſince the Apoſtles days, we need not to be anxious about it, ſo as to conclude either that the Church or Miniſtry hath ceaſed, becauſe the Line is not ſo viſibly and clearly to be ſeen either in the Church of *Rome*, or *England*, in continual ſucceſſion of Men that were found in the Faith, in all the Eſſentials of it, during the dark Night of Error that hath obſcured it.

What if God ſhould be pleaſed at this preſent time ſo to illuminate ſome Popiſh Biſhops in *Italy*, *Spain*, *France*, *Germany*, &c. and inſpire them with a holy Zeal to renounce Popery, and ſet up for a Reformation, would not all the Diſſenters rejoice with us, and be ready to ſay, Let them go on and proſper? ſhould they need any new Ordination to exerciſe their Epiſcopal Function? When God Almighty debaſed *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Pride, and took from him the Heart of a Man, and gave him the Heart of a Beaſt, until ſeven times paſſed over him; and after that took from him the Heart of a Beaſt, and gave him the Heart of a Man, and cauſed his Underſtanding to return to him: Did he need a new Coronation? or might he not exerciſe his Regal Authority, as he did before, without any new Coronation or Inauguration? Was the Miniſtry of Popiſh Biſhops and Teachers like poiſonous Waters? and were the Waters cured of the poiſonous quality, and made healthful here in *England*? muſt we now refuſe to drink them, after they are become healthful, becauſe they were loathſome before? The Church was to be reform'd, and not new founded; the ancient Foundations preſerved, and only the Rubbiſh ſeparated, and caſt away, which was done at the Reformation, by the firſt Reformers here in *England*, who were ſome of them Biſhops, and others of them generally ſuch as owned Epiſcopal Government as an Appointment of Chriſt in the Church.

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